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ABSTRACT

The administration of the Department of Education in Victoria (Australia) went through many organizational structural changes in the period 1970-1986. This paper describes the sequence of these changes, identifies the persons and more general social forces behind them, and details their major effects on various levels of the educational system. For 100 years, until 1972, all functional, geographic, and subject areas of administration were incorporated under statewide central office directors of primary, technical, secondary, and special school education. In 1972, however, regional administration, based on geographic groupings of schools, was introduced, beginning a trend toward decentralization that intensified in the period 1979-1981, when extensive reviews of educational policies and concurrent goal setting resulted in the goal setting resulted in the location of decision making at the school as well as at the regional level. From 1982 to 1985 the primary focus shifted even more to the schools, accompanied by attention to issues of group accountability, equity, consultation, and participative processes at school, regional, and central levels. A Devolution Process Study undertaken in 1985 by the Ministry of Education urges cooperation among all sectors of education and emphasizes openness to continued structural change. Five figures are included and 51 notes are appended. (IW)

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A E R A SYMPOSIUM

AUSTRALIAN PERSPECTIVES ON STATE-WIDE EDUCATIONAL REFORMS

RESTRUCTURING THE VICTORIAN EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

PAPER 1

THE IMPACT OF CHANGING VALUES ON ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURES IN EDUCATION

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THE IMPACT OF CHANGING VALUES ON ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURES IN EDUCATION

by

JEFFREY F. DUNSTAN

A sequence of organisational structures for the administration of education in Victoria is identifiable in the period 1970-1986. Each successive structure reflects what was valued by government and educationists in their determination to provide an efficient and effective delivery of education services to students. This article addresses these values and their impact on organisational structures during that period, with specific concentration on the period from 1982 to 1986.

This is the first paper in a sequence of papers on 'Australian Perspectives on State-wide Educational Reforms', dealing specifically with the restructuring of the Victorian Education Department from 1979 to 1985. In this paper, therefore, it is intended, as a prelude to the other papers, to describe the sequence of structural changes, and to identify the values and principles underpinning these changes.

The Schools Division of the Ministry of Education in Victoria (until November, 1985 designated as 'The Education Department') is responsible for the provision of education for children of

2 Treasury Place, Melbourne. Nauru House, 80 Collins Street, Melbourne. Rialto Towers, 525 Collins St, Melbourne

compulsory school age, i.e. six to fifteen years, and for those persons outside the age range who desire to undertake schooling within the framework of Preparatory Year to Year 12 studies.[1] In 1985, 564,894 students attended 2,108 government schools throughout the state. Each of these schools has been supported by an administrative framework and by many kinds of services[2] as the annual budget of $2.5 billion has been translated into teacher-student interaction at classroom level. In the final analysis,' structural change is designed to improve support to schools in their vital task, by effective organisation and deployment of the resources available to match their perceived needs and through the facilitation of communication to enable the rapid transmission of ideas and concerns to and from those responsible for policy formation'.[3]

1. The Period to 1972

Structures in educational administration can be based on categories of students (primary, post-primary, etc.), functional responsibilities (personnel, facilities, etc.), geographical groupings of schools (regions, districts, etc.),or subject groupings (faculties in Humanities, Science, etc.). Until 1972, education in Victoria had for one hundred years been organised around categories of students: primary, technical, secondary and special school students progressively. State-wide central office directors of primary, secondary, technical and special divisions traditionally exercised authority over their respective schools because they held the responsibility for curriculum and the power over resource allocation. All functional, geographic and subject

areas of administration were incorporated into the divisional framework. Each division was a mini-department, with power and responsibility clearly held at central level.[4] Figure 1 reflects this centralised divisional structure.

What were valued throughout such a centralised period of administration were uniformity of curriculum provision throughout the state, accountability exercised through divisional inspectors through their directors to the Minister and equity of resource provision through state-wide schedules applied to personnel, facilities and finance. R.J.W. Selleck noted that 'the major decisions (for example, what should be taught, when, how and by whom; what the teaching should cost; how the teachers should be paid, disciplined and promoted) were made by a small group of bureaucrats in Melbourne. From 1873, when the Department first opened its doors, until the present, experts from other countries who strayed into Australia have expressed their wonderment (often in an ill-informed way) at the power of the central authorities'.[5]

2. The Period 1972 to 1979

On January 1, 1972, the second century of state education commenced in Victoria with a fundamental structural change. Regional administration, based on geographic groupings of schools, was introduced for the first time. It was pioneered in three country regions and extended in June, 1974 to embrace

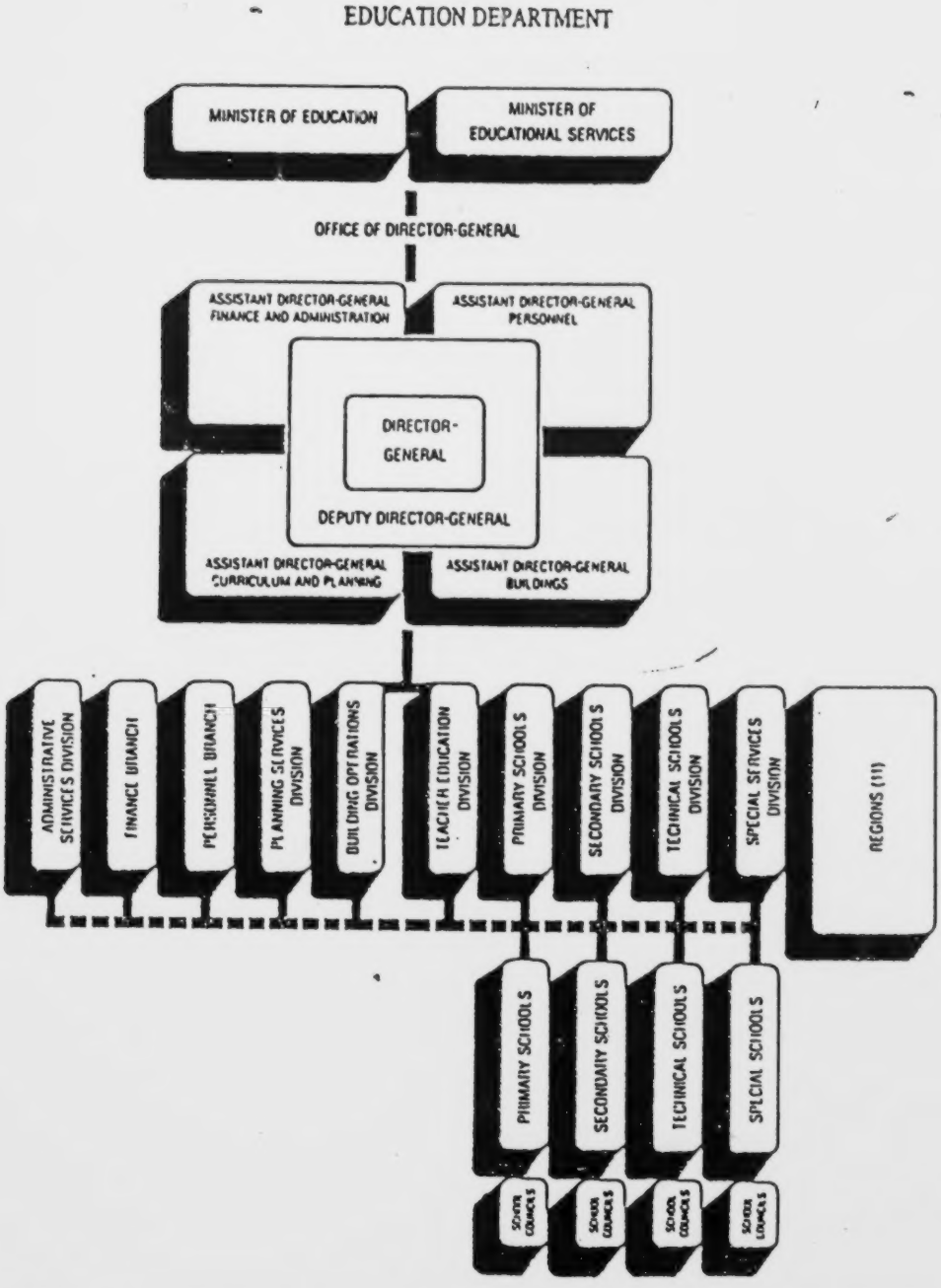

Fig 1. Organisational Structure of the Education Department of Victoria, May 1979

Note: From 'Perspectives on Organisational Change' (p.417) by Frazer, Dunstan and Creed (eds.) Longman Cheshire, Melbourne, 1985. Reprinted by permission

the whole state through eleven regions. A clear intention was to make more manageable the administration of a system which had grown remarkably over ten decades. As Kandel noted in 1961,

> 'Even in the smaller states the point has obviously been reached where one man can no longer handle all the reins alone; the formidable pile of paper work either crushes the man or delays vital decisions long past the point of reasonable efficiency.'[6]

As far back as 1958, the then Minister of Education, the Hon. L. H. S. Thompson, after studying developments in regional education structures in New South Wales, wrote a report in which he recommended that a system of decentralisation be adopted which would encourage initiative and self-reliance among senior officers, stimulate local interest in school life, and allow the top administrators more time to concentrate upon the broader issues of education policy.[7]

Mr. F. H. Brooks, past Director-General of Education, admitted in 1972 that

> 'The centralised authority tends to be regarded as authoritarian, remote, and sometimes unsympathetic to, and ignorant of, local problems'.[8]

The Minister believed that a decentralised system would alleviate these problems by extending authority for decision-making much closer to schools and communities. One hundred years of centralised administrative tradition was thus modified by the introduction of a new-look structure wherein regions began to accept a share of authority.

There is little doubt that public disenchantment with a large bureaucracy had developed in Victoria. By inserting a reference point closer to schools, a reference point which was at

once visible, accessible, and prepared to encourage participation in decision-making, it was possible at regional level accurately, immediately and personally to explain the Department's policies to actual school communities, and also to interpret the needs and concerns of local communities to the Department in ways that could affect policies. Two-way communication and interpretation of views could thus be introduced potentially to everybody's advantage. These were the emerging values.

A further aspect of significance was the need to introduce lay participation into decision-making. Parent and community interest in the education process is inevitably maximised whengovernment funding of education increases to the levels it has reached in the past two decades. Parent evaluation of the products, as well as their contribution to its directions, become vital, and an administrative structure incorporating regional offices can provide a viable, cohesive, controllable and yet influential means of involvement for all seeking outlet for their experience. The thrust towards regionalisation was an effective means whereby lay participation in education could be at the one time valued, harnessed and contained. For this reason, regionalisation in the early seventies was politically timely.

Thus throughout the period 1972 - 1979 regional structures were established and utilised in conjunction with an existing central administrative structure, as a recognition of the value of personal, knowledgeable, prompt and visible relationships with school communities. The need to implement greater structural change in the light of regionalisation was not fulfilled at that

stage however, despite an indication of its importance in a media release issued by the Director-General, Dr. Shears, in September, 1973:

> 'If the demands of parents and of the community that educational administration should be taken closer to the people through regions and school councils are to be realised, changes much more significant to the total educational structure need to be planned. It involves an examination of structures and procedures at three major levels - the state level the regional level and the school level'[9].

Dr. T. J. Moore, had earlier stressed that the transition from centralised administration to decentralised decision-making was far from complete, and much remained to be done. There were still dangers to be avoided and questions to be asked relating to the most appropriate point of the three-tiered system for decisions to be made.[10]

It is also worthy of attention that, based on the value of policy co-ordination across the system, Dr. Shears introduced into the structure in 1975 an Office of the Director-General, with Assistant Directors-General being given administrative responsibilities based on functions: personnel, facilities, curriculum, finance and administration. There were, as a result, three competing components in the structure - functions, divisions based on categories of students, and regions - each valued for its contribution, yet in aggregate creating confusion amongst principals, teachers, and school councils.[11] The only administrative arrangement not present was one based on groupings of subjects (e.g. faculties).

It was this dysfunctional tripartite administrative structure that led by 1979 to the need for a major restructuring of the system.

3. The Period 1979 - 1981

Shortly after their appointment in May, 1979, the Minister and Assistant Minister of Education announced a review of education policies designed to identify clearly the aims and objectives of education in Victoria, and to determine the strategies, structures, policies and administrative changes that would best assist the achievement of those aims and objectives.[12] Six key themes emerged to underpin the administrative changes and to reflect the principles valued by the Government. These were highlighted in the 'White Paper on Strategies and Structures for Education in Victorian Government Schools', as follows:

(a) devolution and decentralisation of power and responsibility where appropriate to local and regional units;

(b) increased participation by parents, community members, teachers and principals in education governance at all levels;

(c) improved consultation;

(d) economy and efficiency in management;

(e) effective co-ordination of functions and policies; and

(f) appropriate mechanisms for internal and external reviews of schools.[13]

In addition, an Implementation Task Force, established to assist external consultants to translate the White Paper into operation, utilised a range of principles in drafting the structural framework.[14] These principles and their impact on the development of the structure were as follows:

(a) The achievement of the identified aims and objectives of the organisation (as presented in the Ministerial Statement on Aims and Objectives of 12 December 1979) should be enhanced by the proposed structure.

. Each of the published aims and objectives related to outcomes of schooling, and called for sensitivity and flexibility in educational administration, for high quality in teaching, and for understanding and support from the community as a whole. The structural developments were consistently tested against the aims and objectives by the Task Force as they strove to ensure a shape which would ensure achievement of the desired outcomes.

(b) The six key themes of the White Paper should remain paramount, in particular the theme of decentralisation.

. From the outset of Task Force activity, it was accepted that regions would replace divisions as the basis of operations. This element of the White Paper proposals set the basic stage of the new administrative structure.

(c) The need for persons in the proposed structure to be able to address and respond speedily to issues raised by the school system and by the community should be recognised.

. Elements were introduced into the proposed structure to address this need. The inclusion of school councils and regional boards on the one hand and regional officers on the other hand had as one major purpose the need for the system to be responsive.

(d) Operational (line) responsibilities should be clearly identified, with support (staff) functions being subservient to operational needs. The line of accountability through the structure should be clear and simple.

. The short, sharp line of accountability from Minister to Director-General to Regional Director to Principal was specifically planned for this purpose, with the branches to function in a staff relationship. The goal was effective and efficient management, with individual accountability.

(e) A 'creative tension' should be built into the structure to ensure appropriate resolution of the conflict between the needs of the clients (students, parents, teachers, principals) and the resources available to satisfy those needs.

. This relationship was achieved by retaining the needs of the clients in the line relationship and the resources provision in a staff relationship.

(f) The span of control of each manager should be one which can be handled.

. Although generally achieved, one glaring fault was evident. The role of the Deputy Director-General in overseeing two Executive Directors, as well as twelve Regional Directors was not realistic. This was later modified by the creation of the position of Executive Director (Schools).

(g) Rational policy analysis should be encouraged and fostered by the structure.

. This was addressed by the provision under the Director-General of a Policy and Planning Unit.

(h) Dialogue with user groups within the community who use the services of the Department should be facilitated by the structure.

. Again, the provision of school councils, regional boards and regional offices within the structure was seen as an immediate means of access to decision makers.

(i) There should be provision for these groups to influence programs and to increase the speed with which the Department reacts to community expectations.

. The representation of parent and community members on participative bodies was ensured, to address program influence, speed of action and appropriate consideration of community expectations.

(j) Lateral and vertical mobility of administrative staff should be facilitated by the structure. There should be opportunities for interchange among regional directors and central office branch directors, and between principals and senior education officers.

(k) Curriculum development from Preparatory Year through to Year 12, and for alternative groupings of students, should be facilitated by the structure.[14]

. The removal of divisions (student groupings in primary, post primary categories) and the introduction of regional administration was the single most effective structural proposal aimed at the achievement of a P-12 continuum on curriculum, as well as school organisation.

The outcomes of this undertaking are shown in Figure 2, where a short, sharp line of responsibility from Director-General to regional directors to principals reflects the desired change from centralisation to regionalisation in administration. The placement of executive directors, responsible for effective co-ordination of personnel and resources on one hand and for educational programs on the other hand, in a staff relationship to that line was confirmed. Advisory councils at school,

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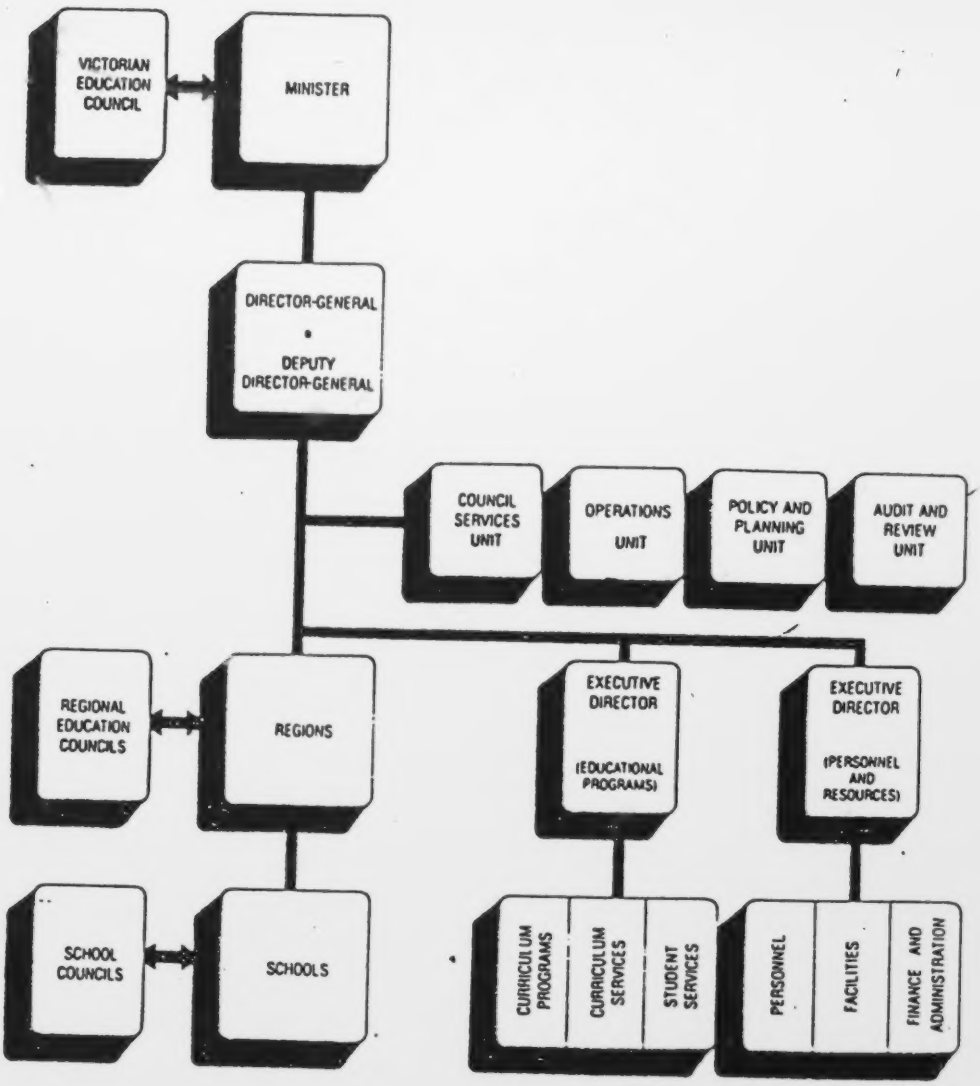

Fig 2. Proposed Organisational Structure of the Education Department of Victoria, *PA Report*, September 1981

Note: From 'Perspectives on Organisational Change' (p.419) by Frazer, Dunstan and Creed (eds.) Longman Cheshire, Melbourne, 1985. Reprinted by permission.

regional and central levels were incorporated, reflecting the proposal in the White Paper to increase participation and consultation at all levels.

The value inherent in decentralised decision-making was addressed by the Task Force when they undertook a task analysis within all administrative functions. The future involvement of personnel to be associated with each task at each decision stage was clarified by use of a decision matrices grid, in an endeavour to ensure that bona fide decentralisation and devolution of decision-making would occur. Figure 3 shows an example of one curriculum grid.[15]

Changes in the location of decision-making responsibility within each functional area of administration were plotted, as a way of demonstrating and affirming the extent of the decentralisation and devolution process. Figure 4 illustrates, in curriculum, the relocation of operational decision-making to regions and schools.[16]

The impact of changing values on organisational structures in education in Victoria was beginning to be felt.

4. The Period 1982 - 1985

The first change of government in Victoria in 27 years followed an election on 3 April, 1982, and inevitably introduced a further major dimension of change into the Department's organisational structure. It was understandable and predictable that the new Government would wish to turn the administrative restructuring in a direction that would accommodate most effectively its philosophies and its objectives for state

DECISION-MAKING MATRIX — CURRICULUM

1A CONTRIBUTING ADVICE ON POLICY
1B DETAILED WORK ON OPTIONS
1C SUBMISSION FOR APPROVAL
2 POLICY APPROVAL
3A FORMAL RECOMMENDATION
3B OPERATIONAL DECISION
3 3A + 3B ABOVE
4 EXECUTION OF DECISION

	DIRECTOR-GENERAL	DEP. DIR.-GENERAL	EXEC. DIR. EDUC. PROG.	EXEC. DIR. PERS. & RES.	DIR. CURR. PROGRAMS	CURR. PROG. BRANCH	DIR. CURR. SERVICES	CURR. SERV. BRANCH	DIR. STUDENT SERVICES	STUD. SERV. BRANCH	DIR. PERSONNEL	PERSONNEL BRANCH	DIR. FACILITIES	FACILITIES BRANCH	DIR. FIN. & ADMIN.	FIN. & ADMIN. BRANCH	REGIONAL DIRECTOR	SCHOOL PRINCIPAL	SCHOOL COUNCIL	COUNCIL SERVICES UNIT	OPERATIONS UNIT	POLICY & PLANNING UNIT	AUDIT & REVIEW UNIT			
1. GENERAL CURRICULUM PLANNING																										
Statewide		2	1C	1A	1B 3	1B 4	1A		1A		1A		1A		1A		1A		1A				1A				
Regional		2	1C	1A	1A				1A								2	1B 3	1C 4	1A							
School									1A								1A			1C 23					4		
2. CORE CURRICULUM																										
Statewide Planning		2	1C	1A	1B 3	1B 4	1A	1B 4	1A		1A		1A		1A		1A		1A				1A				
Development			2		1A		1C 3	1B	1A								1A			1A							
Servicing			2		1A		1C		1A								1A	3	4	1A							
Implementation																	1A			1C 23	1A 2				4		
3. OPTION CURRICULUM																										
General Planning			2		1C 3	1B 4	1A										1A			1A							
Development: High Cost							4										1A	3B		2 3A	1A						
Low Cost																	1A	3B	4	2 3A	1A				4		
Implementation																	1A			1C 23	1A				4		
4. FIELDS OF STUDY PROGRAMS		2	1C	1A	1B	1B	1A		1A		1A		1A		1A		3			4					4		
5. STUDENT GROUP PROGRAMS		2	1C	1A	1B	1B	1A		1A		1A		1A		1A		3			4					4		

Fig. 3. One of the matrices developed to identify decision-making responsibilities.

Note: From 'Perspectives on Organisational Change' (p.268) by Frazer, Dunstan and Creed (eds.) Longman Cheshire, Melbourne, 1985. Reprinted by permission.

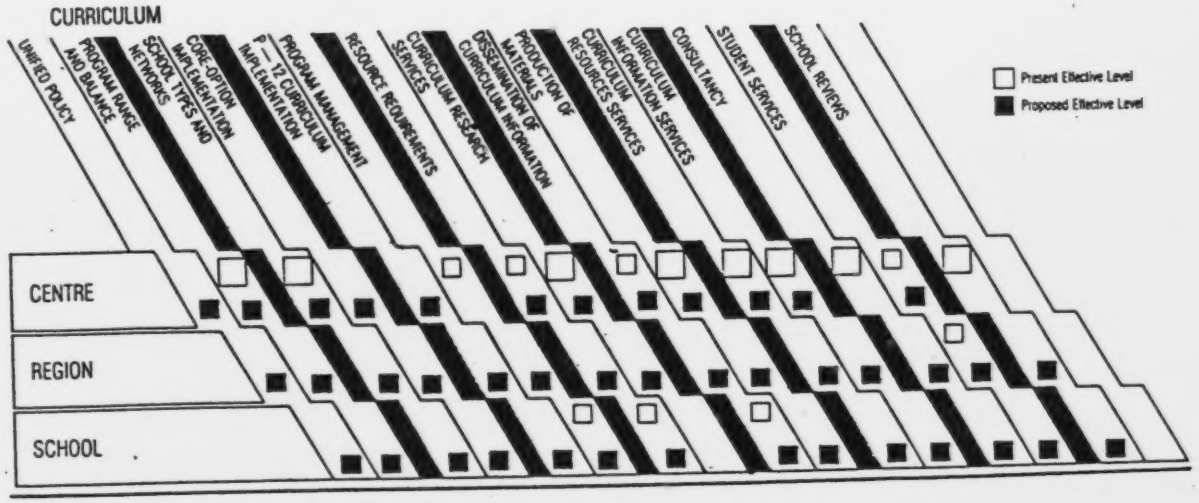

Fig. 4. One of the charts showing proposed changes in the location of decision-making responsibility.

Note: From 'Perspectives on Organisational Change' (p.270) by Frazer, Dunstan and Creed (eds.) Longman Cheshire, Melbourne, 1985. Reprinted by permission.

education.[17] Thus, within one week of the election, the new Minister for Education, Hon. R. C. Fordham, announced that he would 'appoint a small group of people to discuss what implications the restructuring has for Labour policy'.[18] Fifty-nine new positions advertised prior to the election, and based on the restructuring proposals, were deferred while the review proceeded.

Early meetings of the Review Group highlighted the need for modifying the proposed arrangements.

The following criteria used as the basis for examining the proposed organisational arrangements reflect the principles valued by the new Government:

- genuine devolution of authority and responsibility to the school community;
- collaborative decision-making processes in management at each level of the three-tiered structure;
- a responsive bureaucracy, the main function of which is to service and assist schools;
- group rather than individual accountability;
- effectiveness of educational outcomes;
- the active redress of disadvantage and discrimination.[19]

The changes in design criteria from those listed in Section 3 arise from the different values espoused by the new Labor Government.[20]

These values were fully presented, subsequent to the Review, in Papers, embracing 'Decision-Making in Victorian Education', 'The School Improvement Plan', 'The State Board of Education', 'School Councils', 'Regional Boards of Education', and 'Curriculum Development and Planning in Victoria' each of which incorporated the basic principles enunciated above. These principles are reflected in terms of their structural impact in the paragraphs which follow.

4.1 Focus on Schools:

In his Ministerial statement subsequent to the Review the Minister stated that:

> "This review group has provided me with a set of proposals for the adaptation of our Education Department structure in order to ensure that it is in accord with the policies of the Government and is able more adequately to reflect and meet the needs of our schools. The changes which will be introduced focus on the central position of schools and underline the fact that the Government believes that the total administrative structure of the Education Department has as its major role the delivery of services to schools."[21]

This emphasis was re-inforced by the announcement in the Minister's media release that the most important (structural) change would be the appointment of a third executive director who would have the title Executive Director - Schools[22] with the role of co-ordinating the work of regions in their support and servicing of schools. In Ministerial Paper No 1[23] it is stressed that schools should be seen to be' the focal point in the educative process'. The Director-General, Dr. Curry, in his introduction to the Annual Report 1983 - 1984[24] states that

> 'the underlying theme of the Ministerial Papers of 1983 is the focus on schools. Our new administrative structure

> exists to service and resource schools for it is in the classroom where the inspiration, the zeal, the vision, and the goals of young people are stimulated, and the responsibility is accepted for helping young people grow for the future'.

Structurally this focus not only introduced the new position of Executive Director (Schools), but led to the creation at the outset of 1983 of a small central secretariat responsible for the introduction of the School Impovement Plan. Eight hundred and six schools, or more than 38% of all schools in the state, had been accepted into the plan by the end of 1985, reflecting the commitment of each school community to participative and cyclical processes of 'evaluation, planning, implementation and on-going evaluation in order to improve the schooling provided'.[25]

Further structural change arising from the focus on schools is reflected also in changes to the Community Education Program. Re-styled as the School Community Development Program, it 'recognises the value of schools and their communities working together in co-operative networks'.[26] The key principles of the Ministerial Papers provide the philosophical basis for the program.

The focus on schools has led to significant changes in the structure and operation of school councils. Minister Fordham stated that there was a clear determination to give school councils the responsibility for policy development at school level. This was a clear and marked extension of the policy of the previous Government, giving to councils an executive

function rather than a pure advisory function, particularly in curriculum areas. It enabled a clear focus to be developed on schools themselves so that they could be seen as important in their own right.[27] School councils were to be given major responsibility for deciding the educational policies of their schools.[28]

The then Deputy Director-General, Mr. Kevin Collins, in a paper to a Seminar on the Ministerial Papers in May, 1983[29] stated that:

> "The Government will amend the Act and Regulations to make the school council responsible, within the framework of overall State policy guidelines, for the educational policies and plans of its school.
> This is a fundamental change no doubt, and it will lead in turn to new arrangements and adjustments at many points. It is important to realise, however, that it does not represent a sudden or radical overturning of previous educational policies and practices. Rather, it represents the confluence of two strong currents in recent educational thought, which have been growing in significance over the last ten to fifteen years - that which sees the individual school as the most effective focus for much educational decision-making, and secondly, the growing realisation of the importance of home-school collaboration for the optimum development of the child. In effect, these two trends coalesce in the decision to have staff and client linked in a body seen to be finally responsible for the educational policy of the school.'

Further, Mr. Collins stressed that the present Ministerial Papers make home-school collaboration a partnership by ensuring that parents and teachers are both represented and by giving the council the responsibility for educational policy, rather than simply advising.

The foundation of a genuine collaboration between parents, teachers and students, have been laid. Representatives of the various groups have been given the right to participate in the decision-making. School councils have been given major responsibility for deciding the educational policies of their schools.[30]

Another outcome of the focus on schools has been the introduction of new selection processes for school principals. At the conclusion of the structural Review, Minister Fordham advised that he was finalising the appointment of a review team to examine current procedures for the selection of school principals. Under existing arrangements, a seniority system operated whereby the most senior qualified applicant automatically gained the appointment. The Minister believed it necessary that steps should be taken to ensure that selection procedures were based on merit and compatability with the school communities concerned.[31]

The structures and procedures are now in place allowing individual school councils the opportunity to participate in selecting their own principals at local level.

A range of other responsibilities is being focused at school level as a result of new structures: discipline policies, program budgeting arrangements, determination of curriculum policies, and excursion approvals are examples.

4.2 Participation in Decision Making

The first Ministerial Paper stresses that the Government is committed to the implementation of broader participation. 'This commitment will mean that parents, teachers, students, principals, administrators will all have the right to participate in decision-making processes.'[32] Minister Fordham noted that the advertisement in September, 1982 of the twenty-four positions of Assistant Regional Directors of Education was the signal of this re-starting (of the re-structuring process). The procedures used for these appointments, in particular the composition of the selection panels, were a clear indication that the system had changed. He advised that principals, teachers, school council representatives, parents and administrators would all team together in a collaborative process to develop appropriate recommendations for appointment. All key appointments made subsequent to that period have similarly been undertaken on a participation basis.[33]

The use of participative processes is exemplified also in the structure of working parties established to review educational policies and functions within the system : Reviews of Community Education, Conveyance of Students, Integration, Post Compulsory Schooling, Re-organisation of the School Year, and the Student Behaviour Policies. Publication by the Department of the book 'Destination: Decisions - Decision Making Strategies for School Communities' [34] has provided a

stimulating range of participative strategies and techniques to assist persons at all levels of the structure to engage in such experiences more productively.

Components in the organisational structure have been modified to reflect the commitment to participation in decision-making. Within the three-tier structure, at school, regional and central level, formal bodies now in place ensure that those affected by decisions have a say in the making of those decisions. School Councils, Regional Boards and the State Board of Education have all been structured to ensure that participation by representatives of interest groups is practised. rather than a bureaucratic mode of decision-making.

4.3 Equity of Educational Provision

The concept of equity in the White Paper and the P.A. Report from the 1979 - 1981 period is addressed as fairness of distribution, and the need to ensure equity of educational provision. 'It is the collective will of society as revealed through the political process that some goods should be distributed less unequally than the general distribution of purchasing power. Education is such a good, and therefore we have a public system of education.'[35] The 1982 Review of the restructure, while strenuously affirming the school as the focal point of the system, stressed that'there needs to be a bureaucratic structure because the Government accepts the responsibility for the equalisation of resource delivery'.[36] In his media release, 'Re-structuring the Education Department', which announced the outcomes of the review, Mr.

Fordham stated that there would be three directors including one in curriculum, and one in student services. The third would be in the area of special programs, largely related to the extension of equal educational opportunity. For instance, the director would oversee migrant education, country education and programs relating to aborigines and disadvantaged schools. The State Government believed that educational opportunities must be extended to Victorians who had previously been excluded from some areas because of such factors as their sex, race or physical disabilities. Mr. Fordham emphasised that the appointment of a director at this level would provide valuable co-ordination of programs in these areas with a view to providing equal educational opportunities for all.[36] This structural change in the curriculum programs area was the major modification introduced to the branch arrangements as an outcome of the review and reflects a major level of commitment to equality for educational provision. The stucture was thus matched with educational policy, though of course this does not guarantee policy outcomes.

4.4 Accountability and Control

The model proposed in the White Paper and the P.A. Report, perceived by the new government as a centralised control model, was rejected by the 1982 Review.[37] In its stead, a model based on group accountability and participative mechanisms was substituted. The individual accountability reflected in the White Paper stucture stressed the line of authority from principal to regional director to Director-

General, with branch officers operating in a staff relationship, and participative Boards and Councils acting as committees of advice. The group accountability structure introduced by Minister Fordham in 1982 modified the focus or lines of authority by stressing notions of partnership, with Boards and Councils acting as executive groups of which Regional Directors and Principals were voting members. The value of collective responsibility was viewed as the pre-eminent one, leaving individual responsibility as a secondary value.

These value positions are well documented. In his Ministerial Statement to Parliament on 23 September, 1981, Minister Hunt reported that the number of levels of authority in the new structure had been kept to a minimum, consistent with optimum effectiveness. Though it had been recognised that local differences could be addressed through delegation Mr. Hunt stressed that a measure of centralised co-ordination and control was necessary to prevent unilateral action incompatable with overall objectives, and to maintain equity across the system.[38] This position taken by Mr. Hunt re-affirmed the insistence in the White Paper that 'measures to ensure accountability and the observance of constraints must safeguard the ultimate responsibility of government'[39] and also that 'the Westminster system demands that a government shall be accountable to the people for the spending of public funds and that every segment of every department which expends them shall in turn be accountable through the Minister to

Parliament'.[40] By contrast, one of the educational principles guiding the development of state education referred to by Minister Fordham in his introduction to Ministerial Paper No. 2 on the School Improvement Plan was 'processes of shared accountability'.[41] This example re-inforced the goal of 'collective responsibility'[42] introduced in Ministerial Paper No. 1, and further amplified in Ministerial Paper No. 4 relating to School Councils, where under the section entitled 'Accountability'[43] it is recorded that -

> "The essence of the change in the role of the school council is that it makes the principal and staff educationally accountable directly to the school community rather than to distant departmental senior officers. Councils will not have delegated authority which may be over-ruled by appeals to the centre; they will have authority in their own right."

It is fair to point out the difference between educational and administrative accountability, and between curriculum and financial responsibilities, but nevertheless the differing values, reflected in different structures, are quite clear. Bates draws attention to the two dominant metaphors of the debate: on the one hand that of community control, and on the other hand that of corporate management. He identifies the related modes of political authority: on the one hand notions of participatory democracy, and on the other hand that of representative democracy. He stresses the forms of administration: on the one hand a devolved system of decision-making, on the other hand a decentralised system of control.

He clarifies the interests to be served by either model: on the one hand those of local community, on the other hand those of a dominant oligarchy.

Figure 5 summarises the structural arrangements introduced subsequent to the 1982 Review initiated by Minister Fordham. The attention focused on participative processes at school, regional and central level, the focus on schools themselves, and the emphasis on group accountability, equity, and on consultation, while not immediately discernable from the organisational chart, have all significantly influenced its shape and the inter-relationships inherent in it.

5. The Period 1985 - 1986

A review of post-compulsory education, the introduction of a Youth Guarantee system by the Government, the continued expansion of the technical and further education area, and an awareness of the importance of comprehensive youth policies has created a climate in Victoria which acknowledges the value of effort, energy and resources being expended on the development of appropriate programs for young people. The Government's recognition of this emerging value embraced in the terms 'access and success', is reflected in a most significant decision by Minister for Education, Mr. Cathie, who succeeded Minister Fordham after the March, 1985 elections when the Labor Party were returned to office. Mr. Cathie, on 12 November, 1985, announced further far-reaching changes to the administrative structures in education in Victoria, aimed at achieving two important and related purposes: to expedite the process of devolving functions

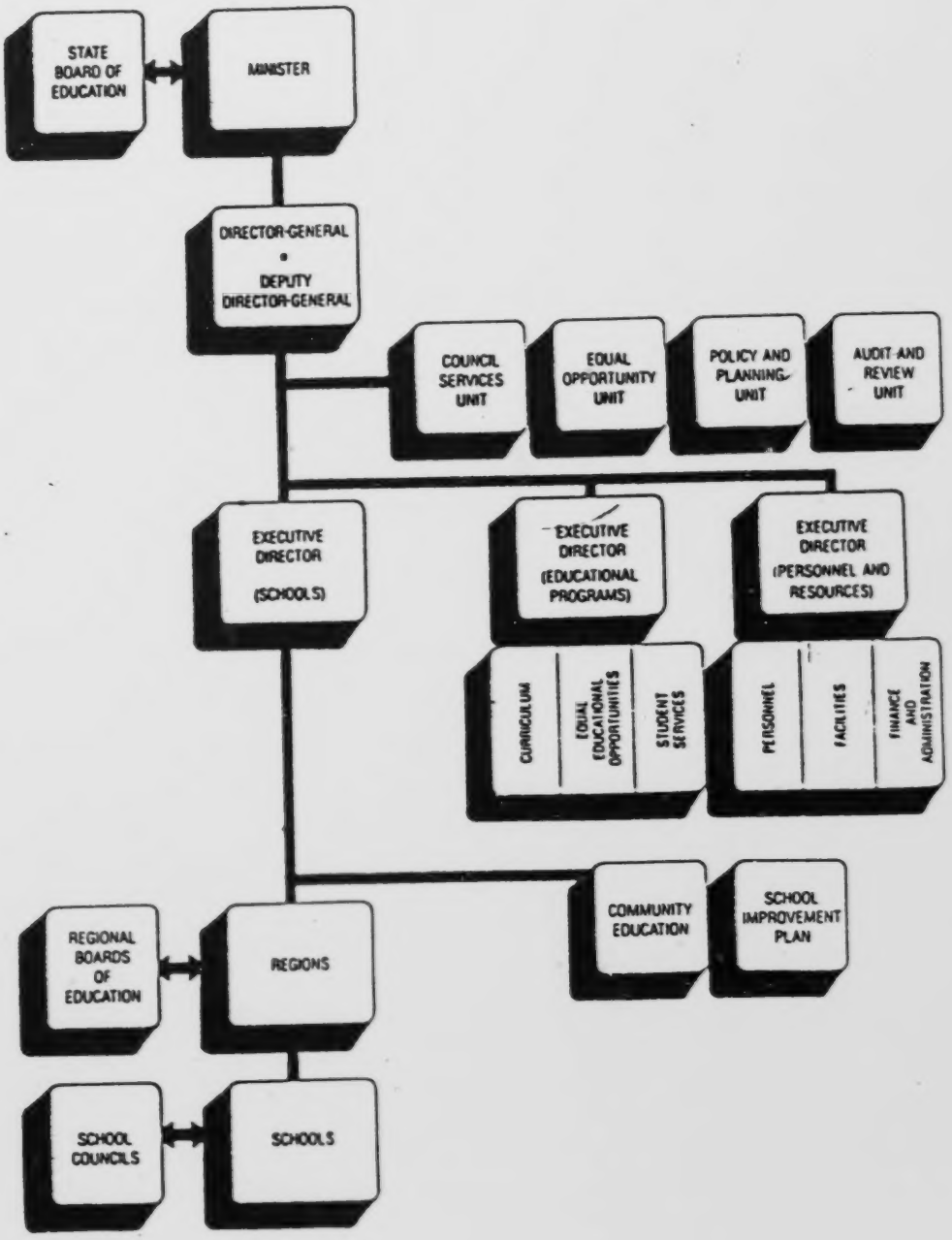

Fig 5 Organisational Structure of the Education Department of Victoria, April 1983

Note: From 'Perspectives on Organisational Change' (p.420) by Frazer, Dunstan and Creed (eds.) Longman Cheshire, Melbourne, 1985. Reprinted by permission.

and authority to schools and regions (addressed fully in earlier parts of this paper, but firmly re-asserted as Government policy by Minister Cathie) and to improve the co-ordination of policy, resources and planning across the education portfolio. In particular, Mr. Cathie announced that a greater degree of co-ordination between schools, TAFE and higher education was required so that flexible pathways might develop between education sectors.[45] There had previously been no officer in the Ministry with responsibilities across all sectors. The resultant organisational structure, still to be finalised in detail, eliminates the Education Department, replacing it by a Schools' Division of the Ministry side by side with TAFE and the Tertiary sectors. A Chief Executive of the Ministry, with responsibilities across the total portfolio, replaces the Director-General whose responsibilities had been confined to the Schools' sector (the Education Department). Portfolio Policy Co-ordination and Portfolio Resources Management are to be introduced as co-ordinating mechanisms embracing Schools, TAFE and Tertiary interests.

Within this structure, the process of devolution is to be accelerated, thus ensuring that the education of children in schools is the focus of joint endeavour. Mr. Cathie thus proposed 'the establishment of a Ministry of Education (which would provide) a structure within which all sectors of education can co-operate more effectively to educate young Victorians.'[46].

Those structural changes, Mr. Cathie asserts,[47] will help to achieve the challenges, valued by government, of:

- establishing a capacity for strategic and integrated management of Victoria's education system as a whole;
- providing a capacity to effectively review programs and plan for the delivery of education services in a restrained resource environment, and
- developing and implementing corporate information systems to support the management of an integrated education portfolio.

6. Conclusion

Thus have evolved the changed administrative structures of a very large bureaucracy. They have altered the traditional shape and therefore the power bases of the Ministry of Education in Victoria more significantly than ever before in its 114 year history.[48] The Devolution Process Study undertaken within the Ministry during 1985 emphasised that 'there is no absolute right way to structure the Department'.[49] There are many of its officers who have been heavily affected by restructuring arrangements who would agree with the assertion, and at the same time recognise the importance of the changes that have been introduced. A large organisation ought not to remain static or become moribund. We ought to be more critical of unthinking maintenance of the status quo in structural shapes and less critical of thoughtful modification to accommodate emerging needs.

During the 1982 Review, Minister Fordham commented that 'the P.A. report or any other model is not here forever. Future governments are likely to make changes more rapidly than was the case in the past'.[50] This re-inforced the conclusion in the 'Aims and Objectives of Education in Victoria' in 1979 at the outset of the restructuring under the former government that 'Society at large is far from static, and the demand which it makes on educational bodies, and consequently on their administrative and service support structures, are therefore likely to change or to undergo shifts in emphasis from time to time.' An awareness of changing values, reflecting educational, social, economic and political trends, should cause us to consistently assess the effectiveness and the efficiency of our administrative frameworks to ensure their continuing relevance for current circumstances. Structures are neither inviolate, untouchable, permanent nor sacred; they are able to be marginally modified, significantly amended or radically re-framed to accommodate the requirements of the organisation.

The experience of education administration in Victoria in recent years has thus been one of continuing adjustment to changing patterns of administration : such experience reinforces the view that structures should enable administrators to achieve their objectives, not to frustrate that achievement. Prompt and decisive action can be taken to incorporate desired new directions. To know when and how, to do so is our challenge.

NOTES

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3. A. J. Hunt, M.L.C., 'New Directions in the Administration of Education', Ministerial Statement to Parliament, 23 September, 1981, p.18.

4. For a fuller explanation see Jeffrey Dunstan, 'The Location of Decision-Making Responsibility in the New Structure', in Frazer, Dunstan and Creed)eds.) 'Perspectives in Organisational Change : Lessons from Education;. Longman Cheshire, Melbourne, Australia, 1985, p.256.

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9. L. W. Shears, 'Media Release'. Education Department of Victoria, 26 September, 1973.

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12. Alan J. Hunt and Norman Lacy, 'White Paper on Strategies and Structures for Education in Victorian Government Schools', Victorian Government Printing Office, (V.G.P.O.)Melbourne, 1980, p. 1.

13. Ibid, p.10

14. Jeffrey Dunstan, op. cit., p. 259-260.

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16. Ibid, p. 270.

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20. Jeffrey Dunstan, op. cit., p. 274.

21. Robert Fordham, 'Ministerial Statement', 14 October, 1982, p. 4.

22. Robert Fordham, 'Media Release', Minister of Education, 3 August, 1982.

23. Ministerial Paper No. 1, 'Decision Making in Victorian Education', V.G.P.O., Melbourne 1983, p. 1.5.

24. Norman Curry, Introduction to the Education Department of Victoria, 'Annual Report, 1983-84', p. 10.

25. Ministerial Paper No. 2., 'The School Improvement Plan', V.G.P.O., Melbourne, 1980, p. 2.6.

26. Education Department of Victoria, 'A Report to the Minister of Education on Community Education - School Community Development', V.G.P.O., November, 1984, p. 8.

27. Robert Fordham, 'A New Government's Review', op. cit., p. 66.

28. Ministerial Paper No. 4, 'School Councils', V.G.P.O., Melbourne, 1983, p. 4.5

29. M. K. Collins, 'The Ministerial Papers : Implications for Schools', May 1984, p. 2. A paper presented to the seminar on Ministerial Papere - Educational policies and structural change.

30. Ibid, p. 5.

31. Robert Fordham, 'Ministerial Statement', 14 October, 1982, p. 8.

32. Ministerial Paper No. 1. op. cit., p. 1.7.

33. Robert Fordham, 'A New Government's Review', op. cit., p. 67.

34. Education Department of Victoria, 'Destination : Decisions. Decision Making Strategies for School Communities'. Curriculum Branch, Education Department of Victoria, 1985.

35. An extract from an unpublished paper prepared by Ian Hind for the Implementation Task Force in July, 1981, entitled 'Concept of Equity'.

36. An extract from a 'Report on the Ministerial Review of the Proposed Structure of the Victorian Education Department', Notes of Meeting, 13 May, 1982, p. 3.

37. Robert Fordham, 'Media Release', Minister of Education, 3 August, 1982, p. 1.

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40. Ibid, p. 3.6.

41. Ministerial Paper No. 2, op. cit., p. 2.3.

42. Ministerial Paper No. 1, op. cit., p. 1.7.

43. Ministerial Paper No. 4, op. cit., p. 4.8.

44. Richard Bates, 'The Socio-Political Context of Administrative Change', in Frazer, Dunstan and Creed (eds.) op. cit., p. 298.

45. Ian Cathie, 'Memorandum to All Officers and Employees of the Ministry of Education and of School Councils', Victorian Ministry of Education, 12 November, 1985, p. 1.

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48. Jeffrey Dunstan, op. cit., p. 280.

49. Education Department, 'A Summary of Issues and Proposed Responses arising from Plenary Sessions of Joint Meeting relating to the Devolution Process Study', April 15 - 16, 1985, p. 3.

50. An extract from a 'Report on the Ministerial Review of the Proposed Restructure of the Victorian Education Department', Notes of Meeting, 13 May, 1982., p. 3.

51. A. J. Hunt, M.L.C. and Norman Lacy, M.P., 'Aims and Objectives of Education in Victoria,' Parliament of Victoria, 1979, p. 6.